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Teaching American History: 20th Century Heroes of Equality HIS-6710 C15

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Title: They Sang Out: How 20th Century Troubadours Inspired Social Change

Proposal Abstract:

Heroes come in many forms. Unquestionably, individuals who put their lives on the line for the common good – soldiers, police officers, firefighters – are heroes. Likewise, political leaders are recognized as heroic when they fight for social change and justice against the status quo. But throughout our history, because a core value of our political system is freedom of expression, many individuals have fought for equality on a more grassroots level, informing and inspiring ordinary people to seek peace, justice and equity for all Americans. During the tumultuous 20th century, the flames of social change were fanned by troubadours – singers and songwriters who realized that the pen was mighty, and music was a powerful purveyor, reaching into the hearts and souls of common folks. This project examines these “lesser heroes” and the music they created to move a nation.

The project will be structured around four broad themes: labor issues, poverty, civil rights, and the peace movement. The intent is to create a series of linked lessons and resources that could be used sequentially as a single unit surveying social change in 20th century America, or more likely be used independently as enrichment and/or extensions of already established units. Teachers at the elementary level recognize the importance of engaging and assessing students through a variety of modalities or multiple intelligences, but time is often the enemy – time to locate and develop resources, and time to teach topics that are “not in the curriculum” (i.e. not assessed on standardized tests). This project is an attempt to compile age-appropriate resources and ideas for delivering 20th century historic content to elementary students through the use of primary sources, particularly songs and images of the times. An underlying premise is that music, being timeless, might cross generations and affect students on a deeper, more memorable level than words alone.

Grade Level: Grades K-6

Seminar impact:

As in previous years, the most valuable part of the TAH seminar has been historic content through speakers and readings. As a veteran generalist teacher (meaning that I teach a little bit of everything at the elementary level), my craft is pedagogy and my weakness, especially in the discipline of history, is not having a strong enough knowledge base upon which to draw for creating lessons tailored to my particular students. Canned lessons don't work because I need to formatively assess my students each year and attempt to lead them, as individuals, where they need to go. Therefore I need to have, myself, a deep enough understanding of the subject to develop a range of questions and approaches at many cognitive levels, to help my students see connections between past and present, and to understand the

world as interconnected systems. The presentations, readings, and resources in this year's strand of Teaching American History have begun to build that needed framework.

Another thing I love about TAH is the open-endedness of the projects, so that each participant can tailor learning to his/her own needs and teaching situation, providing much more value than a course with tightly prescribed assignments. Although my topic began as protest music, I am still very interested in visual learning and how artists and their imagery interpret and convey social issues and climate. Photographers capture a moment, and with good eye and good luck, their images can be both documentary and poetic. But visual artists can take it a step further, often inviting the viewer to look at a situation from a different angle. Because of my interest in this, I visited two art museums exhibiting 20th century work, and reviewed that work in the context of my TAH learning. Two pieces stand out from these visits. One, a commentary on the Berlin wall coming down, quietly spoke to the power of that day, the rejoicing that people felt here, across the wide ocean, on hearing the news (we call it American history that we study, yet we are tightly meshed with the world). The artist stood rocks, pieces of the wall, on end in domino-like patterns, and filmed them toppling – the undoing of a barrier to freedom. The other even more powerful piece was an installation piece depicting the sounds, cries, fears, flashing, and terror of war in Iraq. It was the auditory aspect of this installation that built lasting memory, probably because it aroused a more emotional part of the brain. While I won't be taking my students to these exhibits, experiencing them provided valuable background for me as an educator, in the way that reading historical books or watching a documentary might. It was thought-provoking, and will stay with me. It prompted me to continue seeking ways to integrate the arts in my students learning, and to promote visual and auditory learning as much as possible

Finally, on a personal level, the content of this year's seminar is interesting because I lived through nearly half of the time period. This creates an intriguing layering of introspection and retrospection; a tugging at memory and emotion, while simultaneously looking back through a more adult lens. Many things that I did not understand at the time are beginning to fit into a bigger puzzle.

Central Questions:

- Who are the important folk singers of the 20th century who helped to raise awareness and bring about social change by singing work songs, ballads, and protest songs?
- What can we learn from their lyrics about social conditions, civil rights, and equity?
- What labor issues have we faced and changed in the U.S.?
- What key civil rights issues have changed in the last century?
- What wars were fought by U.S. troops in the 20th century?

Challenge Questions:

- What motivated folk singers? Should they be viewed as heroes? Did their songs make a difference?

- Is it un-American or unpatriotic to protest war and other government policies? Can one simultaneously support American troops and protest war?
- How and why were the times a-changin' during Vietnam War era? Why, when there had been so much patriotic feeling during World War II, were there so many protest songs about U.S. involvement in Vietnam?
- Have the problems (labor issues, poverty, civil rights, conflict) really been solved in the United States? Are there 21st century parallels to these issues in the U.S. and around the world?
- Are there contemporary songwriters who are addressing social issues such as equality and human rights through their music?
- What pressing issues are being raised by grassroots organizers today? Have the methods of disseminating information and protesting changed over time?

Lesson Length:

These ideas are presented as open-ended activities to be used as part of an interdisciplinary unit or as enrichment. There is no set length as they can be adapted to meet the needs of the particular setting.

Key ideas:

- While equality of all people is a self-evident truth according to our Declaration of Independence, and justice for all is promised by our U.S. Constitution, 150 years later Americans were still fighting to uphold these core values in the 20th century.
- Throughout U.S. history, many Americans have lived in poverty, have endured discrimination, and have been forced to labor under unsafe conditions.
- Political struggles and the history of a nation are reflected in its popular culture.
- Unlike some governments, the United States guarantees freedom of expression in the Bill of Rights, allowing folksingers, artists, and other activists to protest freely against unjust practices.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to interpret folksongs (lyrics) to glean information about 20th century American history.
- Students will understand how to use primary sources (especially images, film clips, and songs) to analyze history, and will recognize the difference between these and creative reflections produced later.
- Students will gain an overview of major 20th century issues.
- Students will understand that labor practices have changed over time, and gain awareness of child labor, unsafe working conditions, work-related illnesses, length of work days, unfair wages, migrant labor, and discriminatory hiring practices.
- Students will gain an understanding of Jim Crow laws and the struggles for civil rights.

- Students will know the meaning of the terms Great Depression, Dust Bowl, breadlines, soup kitchens, relief office, and other references to the 1930's, and understand the poverty of this time period.
- Students will understand that protesters in the 1960's and early 70's demanded social change and peace

National History Standards:

- **Historical Thinking Standard 1** – The student thinks chronologically and is able to interpret data in timelines, create timelines, and explain change over time.
- **Historical Thinking Standard 2** – The student comprehends a variety of historical sources, and is able to draw upon data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, etc.
- **Historical Thinking Standard 3** – The student engages in historical analysis and interpretation, formulating questions to focus inquiry and analysis.
- **Historical Thinking Standard 5** – The student engages in historical issues-analysis by identifying problems and dilemmas confronting people in stories and in the history of their nation; analyzing the interests, values and points of view; and identifying causes of the problems.
- **History Standard 1B** – The student understands the different ways people of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups and of various national origins have transmitted their beliefs and values.
- **History Standard 4B** – The student understands ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.
- **History Standard 5** – The student understands the movements of large groups of people in the United States long ago.
- **History Standard 6A** – The student understands folklore and other cultural contributions and how they helped form a national heritage.
- **Era 6 Standard 2B** – The student understands race relations and the struggle for equal rights.
- **Era 6 Standard 3A/B** – The student understands labor issues: how the nature and conditions of work changed; labor conflicts.
- **Era 8 Standard 1B** – The student understands how American life changed during the 1930's.
- **Era 9 Standard 4A** – The student understands the advancement of civil rights.

Vermont Grade Expectations:

- **H&SS: 7** – Students will communicate their findings by developing presentations.
- **H&SS: 8** – Students connect the past with the present by...
 - Describing ways that life in the U.S. has both changed and stayed the same over time, and explaining why these changes have occurred;
 - Investigating how events, people, and ideas have shaped the U.S. and hypothesizing how different influences could have led to different consequences.

- **H&SS: 9** – Students show understanding of how humans interpret history by...
 - Identifying different types of primary and secondary sources;
 - Identifying attitudes, values, and behaviors of people in different historical contexts.
- **H&SS: 12** – Students show understanding of human interaction with the environment over time by...
 - Describing how patterns of human activities relate to natural resource distribution;
 - Recognizing patterns of voluntary and involuntary migration in the U.S.
- **H&SS:13** – Students analyze how and why cultures continue and change over time by identifying expressions of culture in the U.S. through analysis of various modes of expression such as poems, songs, dances, stories, paintings, and photographs.
- **H&SS: 14** – Students act as citizens by...
 - Explaining their own point of view on issues that affect society;
 - Illustrating how individuals and groups have brought about change.
- **H&SS: 15** – Students show understanding of various forms of government by...
 - Describing the basic principles of American democracy.
- **H&SS: 16** – Students examine how different societies address issues of human interdependence by...
 - Identifying a current or historic issue related to basic human rights;
 - Explaining how roles and status of people have differed and changed throughout history;
 - Citing examples of how diversity has led to change;
 - Explaining conditions that contribute to conflict;
 - Explaining ways in which conflicts can be resolved peacefully.
- **H&SS: 17** – Students examine how access to various institutions affects justice, reward, and power, describing how different groups gain or have been denied access and exploring alternative ways of getting access.
- **H&SS: 18** – Students show an understanding of the interaction/interdependence between humans, the environment, and the economy by examining how producers in the U.S. have used natural and human resources to produce goods and describing long-term effects of these uses.
- **H&SS: 20** – Students make economic decisions by explaining what happens when people’s needs and/or wants exceed their available resources (e.g. Dust Bowl).

Preparation for teaching:

Suggested lessons require access to music either from recordings or online sources such as YouTube and folk music websites. Likewise, images should be either downloaded ahead of time, or sourced from trade books. Students will need individual or partner copies of images that can’t be enlarged enough for analysis of details in group sharing. Technology components of lessons should be tested ahead of time to assure that links work, programs are functioning, download speed is adequate for the required task, overrides (e.g. for accessing filtered sites

such as YouTube) are in place, etc. Engaging, age-appropriate trade books should be collected in a classroom library for “ready reference” and challenging gifted students. Good classroom maps must be available for integrating geographical/spatial components of the themes (e.g. the migration of people during the Dust Bowl; location of Africa, Selma, Montgomery, Vietnam; where did people pick cotton, grow grapes, work the New England mills). The teacher also needs adequate training and time to “play around” with new computer programs or web tools that might be employed for student projects.

Primary Sources:

- Lyrics of folk songs
- Historic recordings of folk music and speeches
- Archival photographs (by Lewis Hine and Dorothea Lange; newspaper photographs of the Civil Rights movement, Jim Crow signboards, etc.; iconic portraits of heroes such as Martin Luther King, Caesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, Woody Guthrie)
- Newsreel clips

Activities:

Sample kindergarten lesson: Civil Rights

It is difficult for kindergarten children to relate to the celebration of Martin Luther King’s birthday, as they have no historical context to understand his accomplishments and sacrifice. The racial issues are particularly foreign to Vermont children who have little experience with racial and cultural diversity. Time permitting; there are many picture books that could expand on these themes after this introductory lesson, which takes about an hour.

- Look at photographs of children from around the world to introduce global racial and cultural diversity. The book *Children Just Like Me*, which is organized by continent, is good for this purpose. Talk about the color of the children’s skin, the countries/continents represented, the kind of clothing worn by the children, ideas about what the weather might be like where they live, etc.
- Give a brief overview story of black history in the United States. Use a world map or globe to explain visually where African slaves were captured and removed from their homes, and how they were cruelly transported in ships to be sold in America. Time permitting, read a picture book about slavery, or show a few good illustrations or period photographs of slavery. Explain the time frame with a timeline and/or generational reference (i.e. in the time of your great.....grandparents).
- Discuss how people helped to free slaves and fought to end slavery. Ask children how they think people of color were treated by white people for the next 100 or so years after slavery was abolished: “Do you think everyone was treated fairly and equally then? It was all good, right?”
- Use Visual Thinking Strategies to talk about iconic Civil Rights images. I used “Selma-to-Montgomery March for Voting Rights in 1965” by James Karales from the “Picturing America” collection, and several photographs included in the Teacher Created Materials kit *Civil Rights Movement: Exploring History through Primary Sources*. When using VTS, the

teacher asks, "What's happening in this picture?" In this context, this strategy serves the dual purpose of assessing students' prior knowledge and initiating conversation. Depending on conversation generated, ask students about the fairness of certain Jim Crow, racist situations: bus seats for whites only, not being allowed to play in parks for whites only, having to use separate facilities, being beaten for the color of your skin, not being able to vote, etc. Introduce the word "protest" – how could people protest against unfair practices without fighting a war?

- Teach the song, "We Shall Overcome." Have students contribute their own lyrics to the verses as they march around the room.
- Show photo of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and read a bit of the "I Have a Dream" speech. Talk about the power of words, and about how people of all races came together at rallies to listen to him and sing unity and protest songs. Explain that he was killed, and that we continue to honor him and his beliefs each year on his birthday.
- Teach the song "If I Had a Hammer" with hand motions, and talk about the symbolism in the song.
- Make brotherhood bracelets by stringing multi-skin-tone pony beads (black, tan, white, yellow, brown) on pipe cleaners, with the only rule being that each bracelet needed to contain all colors.

Sample 3rd grade lesson: Child Labor

This lesson was inserted into a full unit on Child Labor designed by 3rd grade teacher David Marr. Please see his TAH project for the full scope of activities and prior knowledge of the children.

- Brainstorm the reasons people sing songs and the kinds of songs they sing
- Talk about work songs. "How does it make you feel to sing while you are working? What if the work was very boring and repetitive – could a song help you to keep going?"
- Introduce and teach "Pick a Bale of Cotton." Songs like this were sung by people while they worked. They are primary sources of information about life in a certain historical time period because they were written and sung at that time.
- Explain that we can also learn about history from people who think back on a time period or event, and write about it later in time. Listen to YouTube clip of Dorsey Dixon singing his song, "Babies in the Mill." Talk about the lyrics. "Is he really talking about babies? What is he trying to tell us with this song? Do you think he approves of child labor?"
- Hand out lyrics sheets and teach the song.
- After a few days of practicing, the students record their songs using "Audacity" for use in their final group project, a Child Labor video.

Sample 4th grade lessons: Images of America

Students examine the familiar song, "This Land is Your Land" to learn more about the Great Depression and the U.S. in the late 30's and early 40's. This activity would complement a study of the Dust Bowl, and would work well in conjunction with a literature circle reading Karen

Hesse's *Out of the Dust* (which is also available as an audio). For struggling readers, another good option would be *Dust for Dinner* by Ann Turner, a 64-page easy reader. Dorothea Lange's photos could be included in this unit.

- Ask students if they know the song, and see if anyone would volunteer to sing it.
- Introduce Woody Guthrie. Play some clips of him singing. Hand out photocopies of Guthrie's original handwritten version (primary source) entitled "God Blessed America." Have students read through the lyrics with partners, looking to spot differences between the original and the version they know. Discuss any unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult words (e.g. Relief Office; trouble reading cursive). What was Guthrie trying to say in this song? How did the song change (compare to lyrics in a school song book or trade book)? Why do later versions leave parts out? (This could be a group discussion or a short writing prompt, depending on the background knowledge of the students.)
- Hand out copies of the picture book *This Land is Your Land* with illustrations by Kathy Jakobsen. Look at the lyrics in relation to the paintings – how did the illustrator choose to interpret Guthrie's lyrics? Does the tone of the painting match the tone of the original song?
- Have students read the book, telling them to be sure to "read" the pictures as well as all text, including quotes by Guthrie. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups.
- Group discussion about the quotes and group "reading" of a picture. "What's happening in this picture? Is it positive or negative?"
- Students read the back matter for homework – "A Tribute to Woody Guthrie" by Pete Seeger, and brief photobiography. Students examine the illustrations more closely, and write at least two entries in a "wonder journal" – e.g., "I wonder about hobo trains," "I wonder about migrant farm workers."
- Students choose a topic or place from the book to do individual research and a presentation about this land that was made for you and me. The presentation should include historical perspective, factual information, and visuals.
- Students present their findings to the class. Projects are then combined into a group project using Photo Story, PowerPoint, or similar software. Background music will be clips of Woody Guthrie and student voices singing "This Land is Made for You and Me."

Sample 5th grade lesson: Agricultural Issues

This overview lesson integrates environmental studies, particularly farming practices and climate change, with farm labor issues. It could be combined with the previous 4th grade lessons to build a more complete unit, but I used it to expand our students' environmental understanding in conjunction with our emergent school garden and local foods initiatives. I wanted them to see the connection between some of the American heroes they were studying in social studies (see Cathy Canty's unit) and their own stewardship efforts.

- Ask the class to sing the first verses of "America the Beautiful" and "This Land is Your Land" together, thinking about the words. Pass out small strips of paper each with a single line from one of the songs. Call on students to read their strips and comment on what they imagine from the lyrics.

- Brief class discussion – are these “true” ideas of America? Why or why not?
- Form groups of 2-3 students. Pass out a different photograph from the American Memory FSA Collection from the Great Depression to each group (I selected photos with a fair amount of detail showing children or families). Each group spends about 5 minutes “reading” and discussing their picture in terms of the people, objects and land (see handout). Each group appoints a spokesperson to share with whole class – project each image during sharing. Brief discussion – what happened? Are these “true” images of America? Do these scenes match the thoughts in the songs above? Mention work of Dorothea Lange.
- Show 5 minute YouTube clip, “Dust Bowl Disaster Slideshow,” revised version, which features the Guthrie song by the same name. Give background information on Woody Guthrie. Talk about the idea of songwriters and photojournalists being kinds of heroes – people who got the message across when things weren’t going so well. Pass out copies of lyrics of “Dust Bowl Disaster” and full text of “This Land is Your Land.” What was Guthrie trying to tell people through his songs?
- Give short lecture on Dust Bowl history: causes (poor farming practices, marginal soils, weather – relate this to current climate change), forced migrations of people, “golden opportunities” in California.
- Read picture book, *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. Discussion – did everything go well for the Chavez family and other folks who migrated to California?
- Time permitting, talk more about the conditions and plight of migrant farmworkers before and after the protest work and victories of Chavez and Dolores Huerta. Discuss their practice of nonviolence. End with the protest song “We Shall Overcome.”
- Follow-up/extension: What is it like for migrant workers today? Research the situation for Mexican workers on Vermont dairy farms. The Vermont Folklife Center has good interviews of some of the workers in Addison County.

Assessment:

My teaching assignment (Enrichment) demands that assessment be formative and informal, with continual adjustments made to my presentation content and delivery in accordance with students’ prior knowledge and evidence of new learning. I sometimes have only one session on a particular topic with a group of students. The intent is not mastery, but rather to provide an introductory framework - exposure and familiarity with the people, events, and concepts of the time period. Evidence of this familiarity could be gleaned from group brainstorming sessions (e.g. “Tell me everything you know about the Dust Bowl...”), “reading” pictures (progress would be indicated if students make increasing amount of historical references and inferences), details in student generated artwork, oral discussions about stories and responses to questions with increased correct use of pertinent vocabulary and terms (Jim Crow, equal rights, breadline, protest, march, etc.), students’ ability to remember folksongs and interpret or generate their own lyrics, and connections students make between historical content and their own lives.

Accommodations:

I will use Universal Design principles in conceiving lessons and preparing materials to accommodate the widest range of learners, and adapt the lessons as needed for special circumstances. These strategies might include projecting enlarged images using a document reader, collaborating with my colleague who teaches American Sign Language to sign selected folksongs, using microphones for hearing-impaired children, groupings and partnering of children for particular learning styles, preferential seating, adjusting the pace or sequence of the lesson for children who need to move. This project advocates for a high integration of arts in the learning of historical content, which in and of itself is a more inclusive strategy for students who learn in different ways, however that might be defined (Bloom's Taxonomy, Multiple Intelligence, other current brain theory). The resources and ideas in this project have open-endedness, inviting further explorations by gifted students.

Annotated Bibliography

Adams, Simon, et al. *Millennium Children's History of the 20th Century*. New York: DK Publishing, 1999. Print.

In the typical hyperactive style of a DK publication, this book attempts to cram a hundred years of cultural and political history of the entire world between its covers, illustrating each event with a crisp, iconic photograph, usually in color. The result is a great volume to have on hand in the classroom for short-term browsing (as when a student gets finished with other work early) or quick reference (it is indexed), though many of the choices for inclusion seem random. For example, in a spread on the Music Makers, there is no mention of Bob Dylan (although Bay City Rollers and T-Rex are included), and neither Woody Guthrie nor Pete Seeger even appear in the index (the Sex Pistols are mentioned on five different pages). Also, this is more of a U.S./British history than a true world history, but as it is, there is so much in the volume that it can feel like one of those class trips where students race through all the rooms of a world-class museum without looking at the exhibits.

"America From the Great Depression to World War II." *American Memory*. Library of Congress - Prints and Photographs Division, 15 Dec. 1998. Web. 10 Apr. 2010. <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsahtml/fahome.html>>.

The Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection digitized on this website contains black-and-white images described as "a landmark in the history of documentary photography." There is a wealth of material to choose from depicting displaced families during the Dust Bowl, often at work in migrant fields and makeshift camps. Many of the photos were taken by Dorothea Lange, including the famous "Migrant Mother" series. This is an incredible resource.

Atkin, S. Beth. *Voices From the Fields*. Boston: Little, brown & Company, 1993. Print.

In this photojournalistic work subtitled "Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories," Atkins presents interviews and black-and-white portraits of nine Mexican-American migrant families in the 1990's. In some cases the children relate their stories through poetry, which is presented bilingually. The stories speak not only about the farm work experience, but also to

social issues and the trials of growing up, addressing such topics as partying, being a teen mom, and joining gangs. Although it is now a bit dated, this is a sensitive record of the Hispanic migrant worker experience through the eyes of young people, and a great resource to compare/contrast with primary materials from the Dust Bowl era and later farm labor struggles in California. It could also serve well as a resource for understanding current migrant labor in Vermont.

Bound for Glory. Dir. Hal Ashby. 1976. MGM. DVD.

This film starring David Carradine as Woody Guthrie is set in 1936 at the height of the Great Depression as people are escaping the Texas Dust Bowl and heading for California. Short clips would be useful in the classroom for developing a sense of place during the Depression years.

Christensen, Bonnie. *Woody Guthrie: Poet of the People*. New York: Knopf, 2001. Print.

This picture book biography is beautifully illustrated by the author with evocative images executed by using a complicated resist process, the end result being similar to woodblock prints, with heavy black lines framing Dust Bowl scenes. The lyrics of "This Land is Your Land" are hand-lettered across the pages. This is a very accessible book - appropriate for young students, but sophisticated enough to appeal to older elementary and junior high students as well. Highly recommended.

Greanteawoman. "U.S. Child Labor, Dorsey Dixon, Babies in the Mill, Newport." *YouTube*. Google Inc., 25 Dec. 2007. Web. 18 Oct. 2009. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNeBgpuNMSI>>.

This approximately 3 minute video combines Lewis Hine photos of child labor with a recording of Dorsey Dixon playing guitar and singing his own song, "Babies in the Mill" from his CD by the same name, released by Carolina Traditional, Industrial, Sacred Songs, 1997, HMG Hightone Records. The film was created by a former music publisher on Music Row in Nashville. I used this to learn the melody and capture the correct tone for teaching the song to 3rd graders for their Child Labor unit developed by classroom teacher David Marr. Their culminating project was a PhotoStory with their voices singing this song as part of the background score.

Guthrie, Woody. *This Land is Your Land*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998. N. pag. Print.

This deceptively simple picture book version of Guthrie's most recognized song is actually jammed full of visual information about the United States - our geography, our people, our history. I plan to purchase multiple copies for my classes because the book demands close inspection. Artist Kathy Jakobsen rendered the illustrations in oil on canvas, and many of the double-page spreads of landscapes in a colorful folk art style meet one's expectations of that medium, providing panoramas suitable for group sharing. But interspersed are pages divided into postcard-like panels, each conveying a wealth of additional visual information for students to read the pictures - e.g. Dust Bowl Refugees, Grand Coulee Dam Construction, Homeless People Camped Out Under Bridge, Mesa Verde Colorado. The design of the book begs to be a jumping off point for individual research, research that encompasses both the dark and the glorious lines of Woody's song. The afterward pages include a tribute by Pete Seeger, a brief photobiography of Guthrie's life, and the song's music and full lyrics. Finally, hidden in plain sight, there are tiny squares containing quotes by Guthrie; and borders "inspired by notch

carvings found in traditional 'tramp art' - boxes, picture frames, and mirror frames crafted by tramps, hobos, miners, and lumberjacks in the early to mid-1900's". Highly recommended.

Hakim, Joy. *A History of US: All the People Since 1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Print.

The final volume in Hakim's ambitious chronicle of American history, this is as outstanding as the others. I would choose this series over any text book I've seen for upper elementary through junior high students; and even for high school students and adults, it presents a succinct overview without glossing over controversial topics. While the pages are quite dense with information and images, the layout is clean, with fonts and (subtle) background colors carefully chosen, so the overall design is not overwhelming as in many series targeting the age group. And while the amount of text might be intimidating to some learners, the chapters run to 4 or 5 pages, broken up on nearly every page by well-captioned, significant images. Most are black-and-white photographs from the era (quality varying depending on the original image). Later photos are in color, some are political cartoons, and there are a few good maps. The writing is clear, even for someone unfamiliar with the times and issues. Highly recommended.

Helfert, M., and H. Manfred. "History in Song." *Folk Archive*. N.p., July 2000. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <<http://www.folkarchive.de/history.html>>.

This website compiles important songs in U.S. history organized by chronology and theme (e.g. the labor movement, race relations & the civil rights movement, 1960's: the bomb scare). Major folksingers such as Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan have their own subsections with links to their work. There is also an alphabetical index to all songs. Each song page includes complete lyrics, brief background about the song's significance, a small photo of the artist or subject (e.g. a photo of Emmet Till and his mother). Some midi files are linked but unfortunately I couldn't get any of them to play, and some of the other links are broken. However, there is still plenty of material here. I found the lyrics for "Babies in the Mill" on this site.

Hoose, Phillip. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009. Print.

A recent addition to the collection of Civil Rights trade books for children, this highly acclaimed book was both a National Book Award Winner and a Newbery Honor Book. While most elementary students (at least in our school) will recognize the name Rosa Parks, few (maybe none) will have heard of Claudette Colvin. Yet as a fifteen year old, she refused to give up her seat to a white bus passenger nearly a year prior to the refusal by Parks, which inspired the Montgomery bus boycott. Perhaps because she was a teenager, Colvin's brave act of defiance was overlooked by historians, although she was dragged, handcuffed and jailed for her action. The author conducted fourteen interviews with Colvin as part of his research. The book is filled with period photos and concludes with a substantial bibliography and note section. This is a great resource for teachers and older students.

Johnson, Angela. *A Sweet Smell of Roses*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. N. pag. Print.

This simple picture book was conceived as an effort to honor the ordinary people who marched for Civil Rights, to balance our understanding of the fight for freedom and justice. While the book includes two drawings of Martin Luther King, its main focus is on two anonymous young girls who slip out of their house to join the freedom march. The dramatic black-and-white (pencil?) drawings by Eric Velasquez are rendered from their point of view. The artist was

inspired by the work of Harvey Dinnerstein and Burt Silverman, who documented the 1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott through a series of drawings which appeared in news publications at the time. A few bits of red highlight a moment in time - the innocence of a red ribbon around the girls' teddy bear, the promise of freedom and equality symbolized by the flag's red stripes, and red roses whose scent permeated the air. While this book might not work well as a stand-alone without prior student knowledge (two many issues are contained in its haiku-like delivery), it is an excellent follow-up to lessons on the broader strokes of the movement. Once students understand what was at stake and why, and recognize King's leadership role, this book can help young children understand that the power of change is in organized masses of people, and even children make a difference when standing up for their beliefs - a simple message of empowerment. I might also use this book to introduce discussion about how we all witness pivotal events in our history, even while we are growing up, and such witnessing can make a lasting impression on our belief system.

Kaufman, Michael T. *1968*. New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2009. Print.

An amazing compilation of primary source imagery and newspaper text about a tumultuous year with commentary by the author, a New York Times reporter, this book should be available in every classroom. Kaufman's firsthand perspective as a rewrite reporter, those reporters who had to work at night waiting for breaking news, and then quickly write before the final edition went to press, gives this book exceptional clarity and immediacy. Many of the photographs have become icons of events such as the Tet offensive, the "I have a Dream" speech, the assassinations of both King and Bobby Kennedy, and the Apollo mission. The black-and-white layout is clean and accessible, with full page photos. One can easily use this resource in multiple ways - month by month narrative, photo essay, news articles (which are presented as scans of New York Times front pages with full text of the articles at the end of the book). There is an excellent index and list of further sources.

Krull, Kathleen. *Gonna Sing My Head Off! - American Folk Songs for Children*. New York: Knopf, 1992. Print.

In this illustrated collection of over 60 American folk songs, the compiler includes many with themes of social justice - songs about hard times, labor, peace, how to change the world, how to work as a community. Each entry has an introductory note with historical and anecdotal information, musical arrangements for piano and guitar chords, lyrics of multiple verses, and full-color illustrations by Allen Gans. While the book is arranged alphabetically, an "index of song types" sorts theme into categories such as "Real People Songs" (e.g. "Joe Hill") and "Protest Songs" ("Down by the Riverside," "We Shall Overcome," etc.). This is a very attractive and valuable resource for teaching American history in the elementary school.

- - -. *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2003. N. pag. Print.

This trade picture book, available in both English and Spanish versions, is part of the "Picturing America - We the People Bookshelf" collection presented to American libraries through the National Endowment for the Humanities. In warm, vibrant, folk-art style illustrations by Yuri Morales, and simple text, the biography relates Chavez's life from his childhood to the California grape strikes and march on Sacramento, resulting in the signing of the first contract for farmworkers in U.S. history. The book stresses Chavez's mandate for nonviolence in protesting.

Additional information is included in back pages. This is an excellent introduction, useful for any elementary grade.

McWhorter, Diane. *A Dream of Freedom: The Civil Rights Movement From 1954 to 1968*. New York: Scholastic, 2004. Print.

As its title implies, this book is a year by year overview of the significant events and people in the fifteen year fight for equality culminating in the assassination of Martin Luther King. The layout is superb, with many well printed, captioned black-and-white photos (some large) and a simple, clear font on two-column white pages. I stress this because so many non-fiction books for older students appear overly busy and crowded, but this one covers a lot of territory in a direct, highly readable and compelling manner. The author grew up in Birmingham during the height of the movement. She frankly admits that as a sixth grader, "from my point of view as a white child of privilege, the civil rights movement was unfairly giving our self-anointed Magic City a bad name." She wishes now that she could say this was shocking, but her attitudes were the norm of the time. She felt that she was not prejudiced; she was just a white supremacist. McWhorter has somehow taken that childhood base and turned it inside out in this book, confronting the ugliness of racism head-on, with sometimes chilling detail. For example, Bull Connor assured Klansmen that his police department would give them 15 minutes to assault the Freedom Riders before officers arrived on the scene. When JFK was assassinated, "white school children all over Birmingham cheered. This is a hard but essential resource for older students. Highly recommended.

Norris, Betsy, and Donna Brock. *Civil Rights Movement: Exploring History Through Primary Sources*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 2003. Print.

This is a kit containing ten 9x12 famous photographs from the height of the Civil Rights movement, several reproductions of primary documents, a lesson plan/activity book, and a resource CD. The kit is a useful resource for teaching with primary sources, and could be adapted for use at any grade level.

Partridge, Elizabeth. *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie*. New York: Viking, 2002. Print.

Pete Seeger called this biography for older students "the best book about Woody ever written." In just over 203 pages of clear writing and primary source photographs, the author traces Guthrie's rambling life in chronological chapters back and forth across a country beset by the Great Depression, effects of the Dust Bowl, and anti-Communist blacklisting. The story is also told through excerpts from Guthrie's journals, fragments of his songs, and reproductions of his cartoon-like sketches and concert fliers. Of particular note is the inclusion of his original handwritten version of "This Land is Your Land," originally titled "God Blessed America," a photograph of the notebook paper archived in the Woody Guthrie Foundation and Archives in New York. An enlightening exercise for understanding the value of primary sources such as this piece of paper is to examine the many versions of the song, especially the "cleaned up" versions appearing in public school songbooks. Many of the reproductions are from the aforementioned archive, making this an excellent accessible reference for primary source material. There are source notes for all quotations, and a meticulous index.

Rise Up Singing. Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Corporation, 1992. Print.

Subtitled "The Group Singing Songbook", this book edited by Peter Blood and Annie Patterson, with introduction and editorial assistance by Pete Seeger, is a bible for folk singers. Each of the 1200 songs contained in the volume include full lyrics, guitar chords, authorship, copyright information, and discography. The songs are organized by themes such as ballads, ecology, farm & prairie ("farmers, migrant workers and cowboys"), freedom ("songs of the Black American civil rights/liberation movement"), hope ("gentle social change songs"), peace, rich & poor, struggle ("fights for national freedom and a just world"), unity, women, and work, to name just those topics related to this project. There are multiple indexes, organized by artist, culture, holiday, musical, subject, title, and first line, making this an essential reference for anyone wishing to include songs in presentations. While written pre-YouTube, this still serves as an invaluable starting point - it is handy for remembering those lost verses of songs, but online lyrics searches are often as quick. The real value of this book is in browsing for songs that epitomize an era, then turning to technology to find the melodies, and even primary source recordings.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *When Marian Sang*. New York: Scholastic, 2002. N. pag. Print.

Marian Anderson's life spanned the course of major civil rights struggles in our country. This award-winning picture book biography tells the story of the first African American to perform with the Metropolitan Opera, and the barriers she had to breach to reach her dream. Brian Selznick's sepia and gray full-spread illustrations convey rich information about the people, time, and place, through the use of dramatic perspectives and meticulously researched details: he wandered the streets of Marian's Philadelphia and poured through the archives at the Met, including things such as wallpaper patterns and details from old photos in his renderings. Embedded in the straightforward, very readable text are verses from spirituals that surrounded Marian as she grew up - for instance, on a page describing her travels in a Jim Crow train car, and the humiliation of being unable to get a hotel room after a concert at which audiences enthusiastically applauded her, there is an italicized verse of "Let My People Go." A good project for older students would be tracking down recordings and learning to sing these songs.

Schiff, Karenna Gore. *Lighting the Way: Nine Women Who Changed Modern America*. New York: Hyperion, 2005. Print.

Schiff has done a wonderful job of selecting and profiling the nine women in this collective biography for adult readers. So often the same big names get all the attention, but herein are lesser known remarkable women who fought tirelessly for their causes, which centered on human need. They fought for civil rights and against child labor, they organized farm workers, they exposed toxins in the environment. Many did their work while raising their own children. Most were teachers. Several, such as Dolores Huerta who co-founded the United Farm Workers Union and organized the grape boycott with Caesar Chavez, were overshadowed by the men who were their coworkers. This is fascinating reading and valuable background information for teachers at any grade level. Copious endnotes; index.

Seeger, Pete. *The Incomplete Folksinger*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972. Print.

This book, part autobiographical sketches, part essay, part how-to and part snippets of songs, is as rambling as Seeger himself. It's not particularly useful for students, but it is great background

material, especially for firsthand accounts of the struggles over labor issues, racism, blacklisting, pollution, and war. There are anecdotes about Joe Hill and Mother Jones, and poetic, often obscure lyrics of protest songs such as these: "Don't you hear the H-Bomb's thunder, echo like the crack of doom? While they rend the skies asunder, fall-out makes the earth a tomb." (John Brunner.) The nearly 600 pages were edited by Jo Metcalf Schwartz, who also provided an extensive index.

Stotts, Stuart. *We Shall Overcome: A Song That Changed the World*. New York: Clarion, 2010. Print.

This book might be called the biography of a song. In eight short chapters packed with black-and-white archival images and bold graphics by Terrance Cummings, the book traces the famous Civil Rights song from its roots in African, slave, and gospel music (and in particular, a hymn by Charles Tindley called "I'll Overcome Someday"), to its contemporary status as a worldwide anthem for nonviolent protest. The author touches on other powerful songs in history, freedom songs, such as "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and "Wade in the Water." He goes on to talk about how the song was used in farmworker labor movements, Vietnam War protests, apartheid protests in South Africa, and during the 9/11 rescue efforts.

President Obama referenced the song in his acceptance speech, and parents of children with leukemia sing it to their children to help them fight their disease. A CD of Pete Seeger performing the song is included with the book. A highly recommended resource for explaining the power of song.

Thompson, G. M. "Dust Bowl Disaster Slideshow - Revised." *YouTube*. N.p., 20 Sept. 2009. Web. 9 Apr. 2010. <<http://www.youtube.com/user/gmbud>>.

This is an outstanding and very moving slideshow, just short of five minutes long, showing archival images of the Black Sunday dust storm on April 14, 1935 (75 years ago). The photos are set to Woody Guthrie's song, "Dust Bowl Disaster," (although it is not Guthrie singing on this recording). Guthrie was living in Pampa, Texas at the time witnessing the storm first hand, and it is said that he also wrote "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You" in response to the terror of people huddled with him in a shelter. The height of the swirling dust clouds looming over the houses is incredible.

"Woody Guthrie Lyrics." *The Official Woody Guthrie Website*. Woody Guthrie Foundation, 6 May 2010. Web. 6 May 2010. <<http://www.woodyguthrie.org>>.

It's all here - the lyrics to all of Guthrie's songs. Other pages on the site have biographical information, photos, sound clips, and detailed lists of the archived material (drawings, books, correspondence, etc.) at the foundation.

Handout

Reading the Pictures

Photographs from the American Memory Collection

(Many are by photographer Dorothea Lange who documented the Dust Bowl)

With your partner or group, talk about the following aspects of your photograph:

People:

- Describe the people.
- Who do you think they are in relation to each other?
- What are they doing?
- What are they wearing?
- Do you have any ideas about how they might be feeling? What makes you think this?

Materials:

- What objects or structures can you see in this photo?
- What is their condition?
- Is there anything that you can't identify?

Land:

- Describe the landscape.
- Describe the weather.

Does anything seem odd, surprising, or incongruous about this photo?